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(54) Method for recording television program in video recording apparatus

(57) A video recording apparatus records a television program with an optimal quality according to a residual quantity of a recording medium. The video recording apparatus detects (32) the residual quantity of the recording medium and a running time of the television program to be recorded on the recording medium, to evaluate an optimal image compression ratio. Then, the video recording apparatus records (40) the television program based on the evaluated optimal image compression ratio, making the best use of the residual quantity of the recording medium.

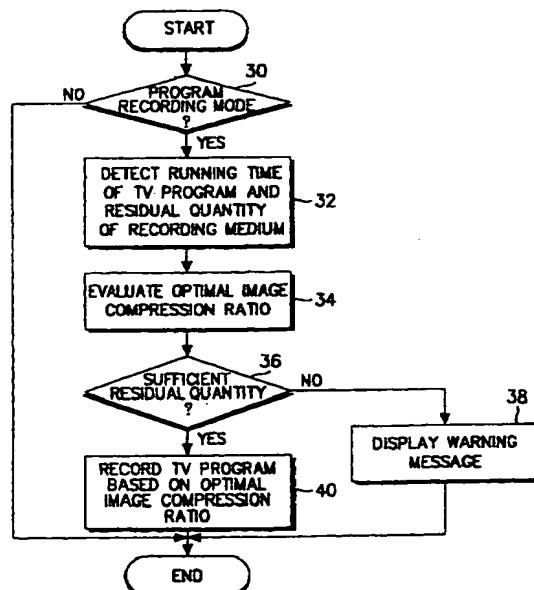


FIG. 2

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Description

[0001] The present invention relates to a video recording apparatus for recording a television program, and more particularly to a method for comparing a running time of the television program to be recorded with a residual quantity of a recording medium, so as to record the television program on the recording medium with an optimal image compression ratio.

[0002] In general, a broadcasting station provides a broadcasting program information service, such as KBPS (Korea Broadcasting Program Service) in Republic of Korea. For that purpose, the broadcasting station broadcasts the television program together with broadcasting program information which includes a televising time, a running time and a classification of the television program, and the name of the broadcasting station, etc.

[0003] Upon receiving the broadcasting program information transmitted from the broadcasting station, a video recording apparatus, such as a video cassette recorder (VCR) and a digital video disc (DVD) system combined with a television receiver detects the televising time of the television program to punctually record the television program on a recording medium. Further, the video recording apparatus detects the type and residual quantity of the recording medium on which the television program is to be recorded, to determine a recording mode in which the television program is to be recorded, or to generate a warning message in case the residual quantity of the recording medium is not enough to fully record the television program. Commonly, the video recording apparatus compresses an image signal of the television program based on a particular image compression ratio to record the compressed image signal on the recording medium.

[0004] However, the conventional video recording apparatus records the television program simply based on the type and residual quantity of the recording medium, and a recording mode selected by the user. Thus, even in case the residual quantity of the recording medium is large enough, the image signal of the television program is compressed with a fixed image compression ratio, so that the recording medium may have an unrecorded residual portion. However, the unrecorded residual portion is commonly too short to record a new television program thereon, so that the residual portion may be wasted undesirably. Besides, since the television program is compressed with the fixed image compression ratio, the television program can not be recorded with an optimal quality, even in case the recording medium has a sufficient residual quantity. In addition, even if the residual quantity of the recording medium is only slightly too short to record the compressed image thereon, the television programme can not be recorded.

[0005] It is therefore an aim of embodiments of the present invention to provide a method for recording a television program on a recording medium, making the

best use of a residual quantity of the recording medium.

[0006] It is another aim of embodiments of the present invention to provide a method for recording a television program with an optimal quality according to a residual quantity of a recording medium.

[0007] According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a method for recording a television program in a video recording apparatus, comprising the steps of: receiving broadcasting program information transmitted from a broadcasting station; detecting a running time of the television program to be recorded from the broadcasting program information; detecting a residual quantity of a recording medium on which the television program is to be recorded; comparing said running time of the television program and said residual quantity of the recording medium to evaluate an optimal image compression ratio; and recording the television program on the recording medium based on said optimal image compression ratio.

[0008] Preferably, the method further comprises the step of displaying a warning message, if said residual quantity is not sufficient to record the television program.

[0009] The method may further comprise the step of asking a user whether or not to record the television program at a high quality, if the residual quantity is sufficient to record the television program.

[0010] The method may comprise the step of asking a user whether to record the television program, even though the residual quantity is not enough to record the television program.

[0011] According to a second aspect of the invention, there is provided a video recording apparatus for recording a television program on a recording medium, which comprises: a program information detector to receive a running time of the television program to be recorded; a recording medium information detector to determine a residual quantity remaining of the recording medium for recording; a controller to determine an image compression ratio based upon the running time and the residual quantity; and a recording unit to record the television program on the recording medium based upon the image compression ratio.

[0012] Said program information detector preferably receives the running time and said recording unit receives the television program as broadcast signals.

[0013] Said program information detector may receive the running time from a bar code and said recording unit may receive the television program as a broadcast signal.

[0014] Preferably, said controller determines a bit rate for the image compression ratio, compares the bit rate with a predetermined bit rate, controls said recording unit to record the television program on the recording medium if the bit rate is at least as great as the predetermined bit rate, and controls said recording unit to not record the television program on the recording medium if the bit rate is less than the predetermined bit rate.

[0015] Said controller may generate a warning if the bit rate is less than the predetermined bit rate.

[0016] Preferably, said controller determines a bit rate for the image compression ratio, compares the bit rate with predetermined first and second bit rates, the predetermined second bit rate being higher than the predetermined first bit rate, and said controller indicates that there is sufficient recording space on the recording medium if the bit rate is at least as great as the predetermined second bit rate, and requests whether to record the television from a user based upon the sufficient recording space indicator, indicates that degradation will occur if the bit rate is between the predetermined first and second bit rates, and requests whether to record the television program from the user based upon the degradation indicator.

[0017] The predetermined first bit rate is preferably approximately 1Mbps and the predetermined second bit rate is approximately 3Mbps.

[0018] Said controller may determine complexities of images of the television program, and adjust the image compression ratio based upon the complexities of the images.

[0019] Said controller may vary pixels in a simple one of the images to a first extent as compared with adjacent pixels, and vary pixels in a more complex image to a second greater extent as compared with adjacent pixels.

[0020] For a better understanding of the invention, and to show how embodiments of the same may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the accompanying diagrammatic drawings, in which:

Figure 1 is a schematic block diagram of a general video recording apparatus for recording a television program, to which the present invention is applicable; and

Figure 2 is a flow chart for recording a television program with an optimal quality on a recording medium according to an embodiment of the present invention.

[0021] A preferred embodiment of the present invention will be described in detail hereinbelow with reference to the attached drawings. Further, it should be clearly understood that many specifics such as the detailed circuit elements are shown only by way of an example to bring a better understanding of the present invention and the present invention may be embodied without those specifics. Moreover, it should be noted that detailed descriptions on the related prior art may be intentionally omitted if it is believed to be unnecessary in describing the concepts of the present invention.

[0022] Figure 1 illustrates a general video recording apparatus for recording a television program, to which the present invention is applicable. As illustrated, a pro-

gram information detector 16 detects program information from a broadcasting signal received in real time from the broadcasting station, or detects the program information from other medium (e.g., a bar code). A recording medium information detector 20 detects the types and residual quantity of a recording medium 14 on which a television program is to be recorded. An image compressor 10 compresses an image signal of the television program according to an image compression ratio signal from a controller 18. A recording signal processor 12 records the compressed image signal of the television program from the image compressor 10 on the recording medium 14 according to a recording control signal from the controller 18. The controller 18 generates the image compression ratio signal and the recording control signal to record the television program based on the particular image compression ratio.

[0023] In operation, the program information detector 16 detects the program information from the broadcasting signal transmitted in real time from the broadcasting station, or scans a bar code to detect therefrom the program information. In the meantime, a user chooses a desired television program by means of an interface means. Then, the controller 18 detects a running time of the television program to be recorded from the program information by means of the program information detector 16, and detects the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 by means of the recording medium information detector 20, to evaluate an optimal image compression ratio. The video recording apparatus records the television program on the recording medium 14 with the evaluated optimal image compression ratio. For example, an MPEG2 (Moving Picture Experts Group 2) compression module with a variable bit rate continuously varies the bit rate of an image according to the residual quantity of the recording medium and the running time of the television program. For example, the image signal of a normal image is encoded with a normal bit rate, the image signal of a complex image is encoded with a higher bit rate, and the image signal of a simple image is encoded with a lower bit rate. In this manner, it is possible to enhance a quality of the image, and adjust the recording time. That is, the controller 18 detects the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 and the running time of the television program, to evaluate an optimal average bit rate (or an optimal image compression ratio). Then, the video recording apparatus records the television program based on the optimal image compression ratio, to make the best use of the residual quantity of the recording medium 14.

[0024] Now, referring to Figure 2, the controller 18 checks at a step 30 whether or not the video recording apparatus is set to a program recording mode. If the video recording apparatus is not set to the program recording mode, the procedure will be completed. However, if the video recording apparatus is set to the program recording mode, the controller 18 detects the running time of the television program to be recorded by

means of the program information detector 16, and the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 by means of the recording medium information detector 20. Then, at a step 34, the controller 18 evaluates the optimal image compression ratio based on the running time of the television program and the residual quantity of the recording medium 14. The controller 18 checks at a step 36 whether the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 is sufficient to fully record the television program. As the result, if the residual quantity is too short to fully record the television program, the controller 18 displays at a step 38 a warning message, on a display, that the recording medium 14 lacks the residual quantity. However, if the recording medium 14 has a sufficient residual quantity, the controller 18 records at a step 40 the television program on the recording medium 14 based on the evaluated optimal image compression ratio.

[0025] For instance, on the assumption that an average bit rate for the optimal compression ratio is about 3-5Mbps, and the image quality begins to degrade at an average bit rate of 3Mbps and seriously degrades at an average bit rate of 1Mbps, if the average bit rate for the optimal compression ratio based on the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 and the running time of the television program to be recorded is lower than 1Mbps, it is considered at the step 36 that the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 is not sufficient.

[0026] Furthermore, the video recording apparatus according to another preferred embodiment of the present invention may display a warning message notifying that the image quality may be degraded, if the average bit rate is set between 1-3Mbps, and thereafter, inquire a user whether or not to record the television program nevertheless. On the contrary, if the residual quantity of the recording medium 14 is sufficient compared to the running time of the television program to be recorded, the video recording apparatus may display a message notifying a sufficiency of the recording medium 14 and inquire the user whether or not to record the television program with the high quality.

[0027] As can be clearly understood from the foregoing descriptions, the video recording apparatus according to the present invention detects the residual quantity of the recording medium and the running time of the television program to be recorded on the recording medium, to evaluate the optimal image compression ratio. Then, the video recording apparatus records the television program based on the evaluated optimal image compression ratio, making the best use of the residual quantity of the recording medium. Therefore, it is possible to record the television program with an optimal quality according to the residual quantity of the recording medium.

[0028] Although a preferred embodiment of the present invention has been described in detail hereinabove, it should be clearly understood that many variations and/or modifications of the basic inventive

concepts herein taught which may appear to those skilled in the art will still fall within the scope of the present invention as defined in the appended claims.

5 [0029] The reader's attention is directed to all papers and documents which are filed concurrently with or previous to this specification in connection with this application and which are open to public inspection with this specification, and the contents of all such papers and documents are incorporated herein by reference.

10 [0030] All of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), and/or all of the steps of any method or process so disclosed, may be combined in any combination, except combinations where at least some of such features and/or steps are mutually exclusive.

15 [0031] Each feature disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), may be replaced by alternative features serving the same, equivalent or similar purpose, unless expressly stated otherwise. Thus, unless expressly stated otherwise, each feature disclosed is one example only of a generic series of equivalent or similar features.

20 [0032] The invention is not restricted to the details of the foregoing embodiment(s). The invention extends to any novel one, or any novel combination, of the features disclosed in this specification (including any accompanying claims, abstract and drawings), or to any novel one, or any novel combination, of the steps of any method or process so disclosed.

30 Claims

1. A method for recording a television program in a video recording apparatus, comprising the steps of:

35 receiving broadcasting program information transmitted from a broadcasting station;

40 detecting a running time of the television program to be recorded from the broadcasting program information;

45 detecting a residual quantity of a recording medium on which the television program is to be recorded;

50 comparing said running time of the television program and said residual quantity of the recording medium to evaluate an optimal image compression ratio; and

55 recording the television program on the recording medium based on said optimal image compression ratio.

2. A method for recording a television program according to claim 1, further comprising the step of displaying a warning message, if said residual

quantity is not sufficient to record the television program.

3. A method for recording a television program according to claim 1 or 2, further comprising the step of asking a user whether or not to record the television program at a high quality, if the residual quantity is sufficient to record the television program. 5

4. A method for recording a television program according to claim 2, further comprising the step of asking a user whether or not to record the television program, even though the residual quantity is not enough to record the television program. 10

5. A video recording apparatus for recording a television program on a recording medium, comprising: 15

- a program information detector to receive a running time of the television program to be recorded; 20
- a recording medium information detector to determine a residual quantity remaining of the recording medium for recording; 25
- a controller to determine an image compression ratio based upon the running time and the residual quantity; and 30
- a recording unit to record the television program on the recording medium based upon the image compression ratio. 35

6. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said program information detector receives the running time and said recording unit receives the television program as broadcast signals. 40

7. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said program information detector receives the running time from a bar code and said recording unit receives the television program as a broadcast signal. 45

8. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 5, 6 or 7, wherein said controller determines a bit rate for the image compression ratio, compares the bit rate with a predetermined bit rate, controls said recording unit to record the television program on the recording medium if the bit rate is at least as great as the predetermined bit rate, and controls said recording unit to not record the television program on the recording medium if the bit rate is less than the predetermined bit rate. 50

9. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 8, 55

wherein said controller generates a warning if the bit rate is less than the predetermined bit rate.

10. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 5, 6 or 7, wherein said controller determines a bit rate for the image compression ratio, compares the bit rate with predetermined first and second bit rates, the predetermined second bit rate being higher than the predetermined first bit rate, and said controller indicates that there is sufficient recording space on the recording medium if the bit rate is at least as great as the predetermined second bit rate, and requests whether to record the television from a user based upon the sufficient recording space indicator, indicates that degradation will occur if the bit rate is between the predetermined first and second bit rates, and requests whether to record the television program from the user based upon the degradation indicator. 60

11. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the predetermined first bit rate is approximately 1Mbps and the predetermined second bit rate is approximately 3Mbps. 65

12. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said controller determines complexities of images of the television program, and adjusts the image compression ratio based upon the complexities of the images. 70

13. A video recording apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said controller varies pixels in a simple one of the images to a first extent as compared with adjacent pixels, and varies pixels in a more complex image to a second greater extent as compared with adjacent pixels. 75

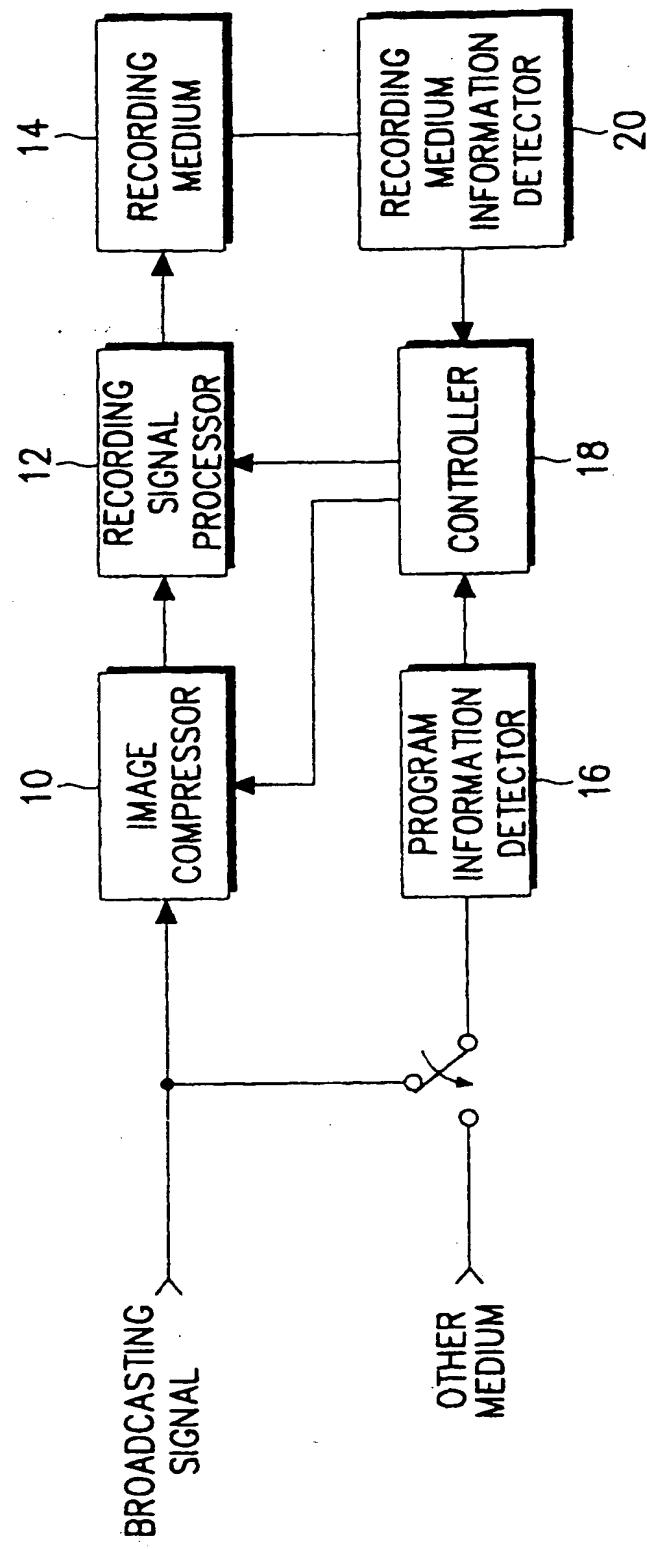


FIG. 1

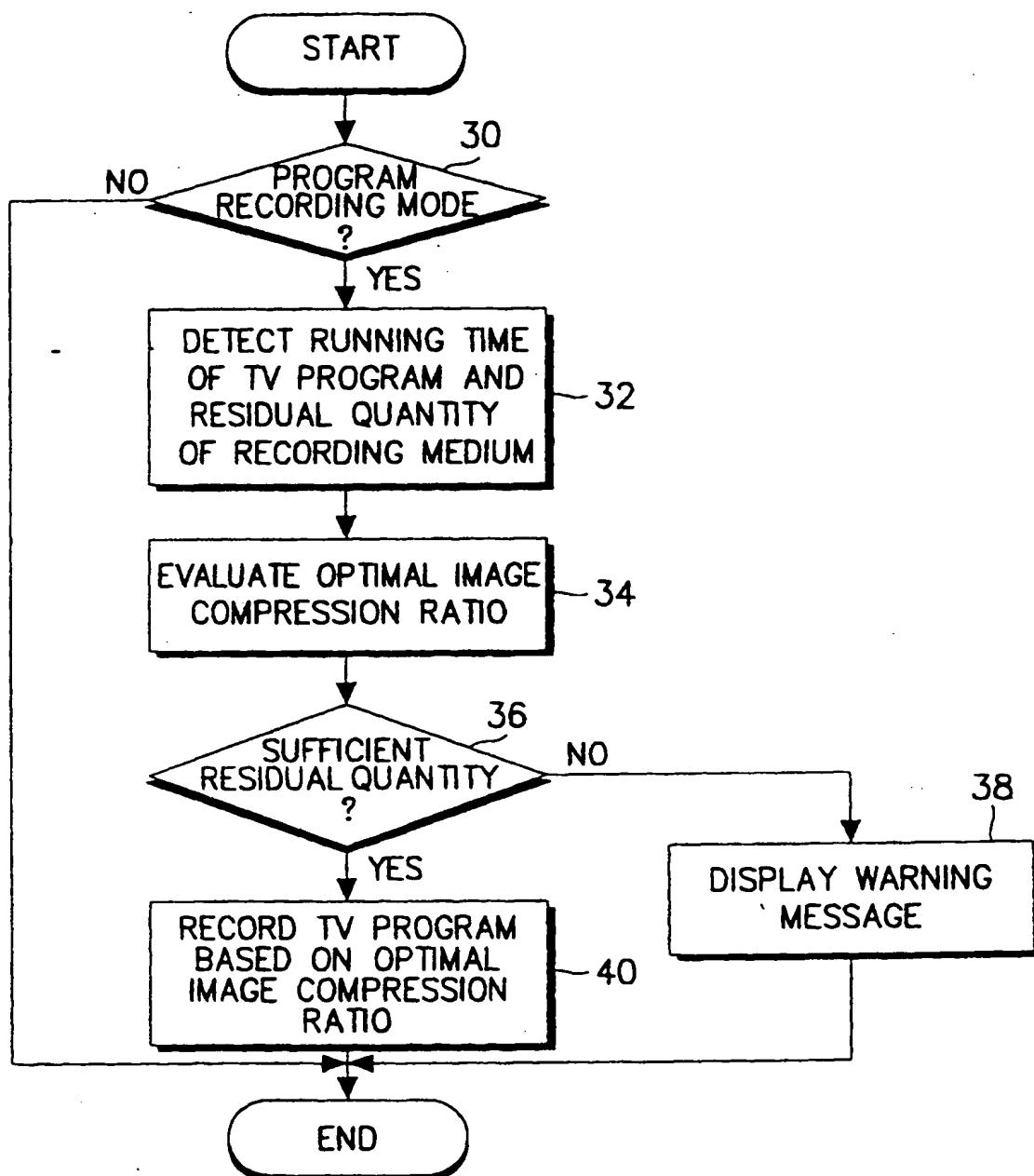


FIG. 2

(19)



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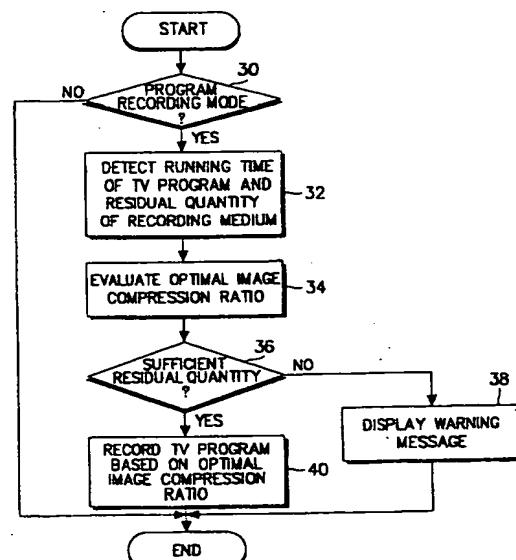


FIG. 2



European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 98 30 2306

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A	* column 3, line 32 - column 6, line 18 * * column 7, line 44 - column 8, line 5 * * column 10, line 46 - column 11, line 31 *	2,3,12	H04N5/782
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	—	—	H04N
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			H04N
Place of search		Date of completion of the search	Examiner
THE HAGUE		3 March 2000	Berwitz, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS			
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			
T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document			



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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

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EP 98 30 2306

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<p>The present search report has been drawn up for all claims</p>			
Place of search	Date of completion of the search		Examiner
THE HAGUE	3 March 2000		Berwitz, P
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		<p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons</p> <hr/> <p>& : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>	
<p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p>			

ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.

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